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NEWS

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EVENING 10,316
SUNDAY 11,016

Pers 2 A.E. STEVENSON

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Add Adlai's Case to Unsolved Riddles

The Who Killed Cock Robin story involving Adlai Stevenson has been going on a week now.

Life Magazine added the latest chapter Sunday with a story reporting—without quoting its source—that President Kennedy himself was responsible for writers Stewart Alsop and Charles Bartlett having access to information they used for the story in last week's Saturday Evening Post.

The President was said to have ordered the State Department and Central Intelligence Agency to cooperate with Alsop and Bartlett.

But, Life said, the writers themselves put the interpretation on Stevenson's role in the Cuban crisis that he was an appeaser. Kennedy had no such intent and had in mind merely a documentary chronology of events, the magazine reported.

Kennedy's press secretary Pierre Salinger responded:

"That story (Life's) is absolutely and completely without foundation."

Even so, this much can be said:

President Kennedy has not taken

prompt and full measures to deny. If denial is in order, both the original Saturday Evening Post story and its description of Stevenson's role.

The result has been all the speculation as to the story's origin and whether the skies are being greased for Stevenson.

The Post-Stevenson story first broke a week ago Sunday. Salinger issued an unconvincing press statement Monday. It was Thursday before Kennedy revealed the contents of a letter to Stevenson which, too, was unconvincing.

Now Salinger categorically denies the accuracy of the Life story.

It seems if the President wanted to scotch the speculation, he could have in the beginning acknowledged the source, if he knew, or declare he did not know but would make every effort to find out.

Even Salinger's repudiation of the Life story does not put the issue at rest. While saying it is not so, he does not say what is so.

In the absence of such forthright action, the suspicion can only persist that Stevenson may be on the way out.

X Pers 1

C. BARTLETT